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VANGELINE

LONGFELLOW



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EVANGELINE.

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

NEW YORK:
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER.
1893.

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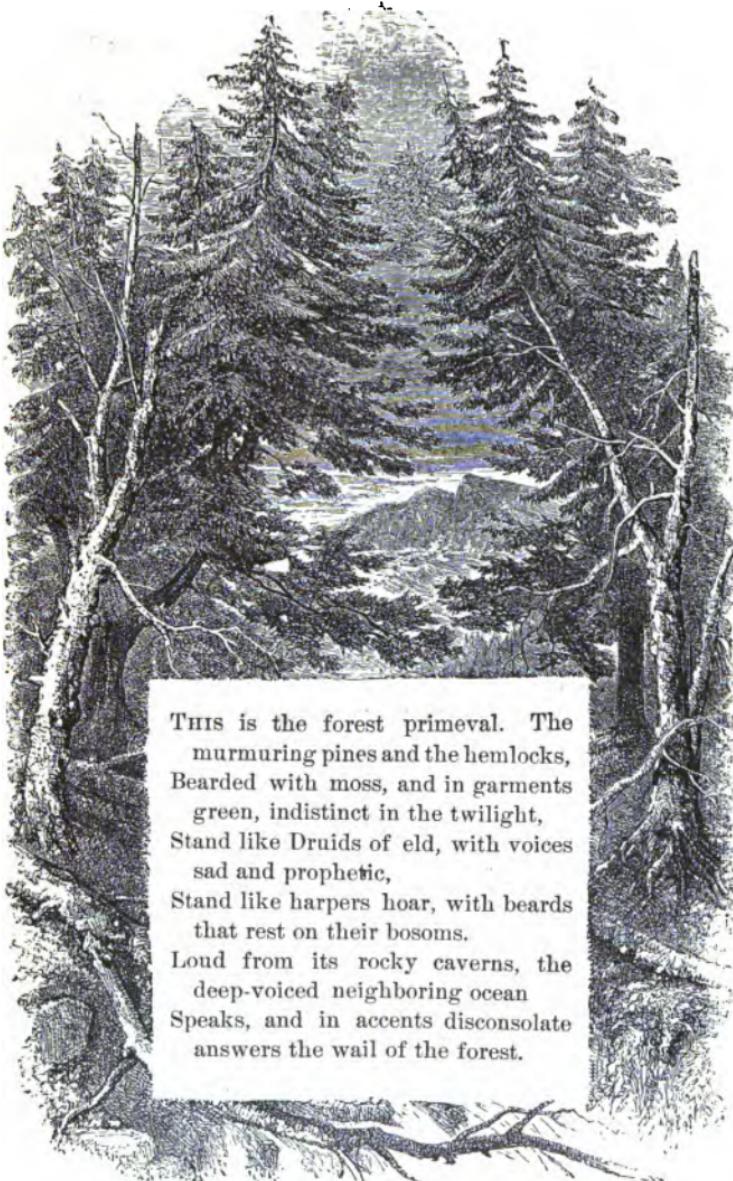
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EVANGELINE.

PART THE FIRST.





THIS is the forest primeval. The
murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments
green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of old, with voices
sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards
that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the
deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate
answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that
beneath it

Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the
voice of the huntsman?

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian
farmers—

Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the wood-
lands,

Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of
heaven?

Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever
departed!

Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of
October

Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far
o'er the ocean.

Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of
Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is
patient,

Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's
devotion,

List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the
forest;

List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.



"Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed."



"solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them."

I.

IN THE Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of
Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the
eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without
number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor
incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the
flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the
meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards
and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to
the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the
mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty
Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station
descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposèd the Acadian
village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and
of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of
the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and
gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the door-
way.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly
the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the
chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in
kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the
golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within
doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the
songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the
children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless
them.
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons
and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate wel-
come.
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely
the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the
belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the
village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense as-
cending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and con-
tentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they
free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of
republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;.

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the way-side,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noon-tide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,

Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.

But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.



"Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her."

When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady

Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.

Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath



*Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea."*

Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.

Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a pent-house,

Such as the traveler sees in regions remote by the roadside,

Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.

Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard.
 There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique plows
 and the harrows;
 There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his
 feathered seraglio,
 Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the
 selfsame
 Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.



"Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses."

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village.
 In each one
 Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a stair-case,
 Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
 There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent
 inmates
 Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant
 breezes
 Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mu-tation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of
Grand Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his
household.



"Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion."

Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,

Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker
of iron ;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he
whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome;



*“Father Felicien,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the
plain song.”*

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all
men ;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the
people.

Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
 Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
 Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
 Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.
 But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
 Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.



"There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
 Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything."

There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
 Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
 Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the cart-wheel
 Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
 Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness
 Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring
bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the
ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the
chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hill-side bounding, they glided away o'er the
meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the
rafters,



"Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters."

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the
swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its
fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the
swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were
children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the
morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought
into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a
woman.

" Sunshine of Saint Eulalie " was she called; for that was
the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards
with apples;
She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and
abundance,
Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

EVANGELINE.



"Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her
collar."

II.

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder
and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the
ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of
September
Wrestled the trees of the forests, as Jacob of old with the
angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their
honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the
foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that
beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-
Saints!
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and
the landscape
Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of
the ocean

Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,

All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the great sun

Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors around him;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,

Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest

Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.

Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending

Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.

Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,

And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer, Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,

Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.

Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the sea-side,

Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,

Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,

Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers; Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,

When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.

Late, with the rising moon, returned . . . as from the marshes,
 Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.
 Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and
 their fetlocks,
 While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous
 saddles,
 Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of
 crimson,
 Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blos-
 soms.



"Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,
 Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor."

Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their
 udders
 Unto the milkmaid's hand ; whilst loud and in regular
 cadence
 Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
 Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the
 farm-yard,
 Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness ;
 Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-
 doors,
 Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fire-place, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow chair; and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him, Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated, Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.

"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside—
"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou has ever thy jest and thy ballad!
Ever in cheerfulness mood art thou, when others are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued—
"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereaus mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean time
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer: "Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By the untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle
and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly,
the blacksmith,

Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he
continued—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port
Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its out-
skirts,



"'Not so thinketh the folk in the village,' said warmly, the blacksmith,
Shaking his head, as in doubt."

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.
Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all
kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe
of the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:
"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our
cornfields,

Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,

Than were our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's
cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to night may no shadow of
sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the night of the
contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the
village

Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe
round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a
twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and ink-
horn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our
children ?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her
lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had
spoken,

And as they died on his lips the worthy notary entered.



"More than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick."

III.

BENT like a laboring oar, that toils in the serf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary
public ;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize,
hung
Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and glasses
with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a
hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great
watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he languished
r captive,

Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.

Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple and childlike.

He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children ;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,

And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened

Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children ;

And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,

And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,

With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,

Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,

"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public—

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser ;

And what their errand may be I know not better than others

Yet am I not *of* those who imagine some evil intention Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why then molest us?"

"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith ;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore ?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest !"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public—

"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often con-
soled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port
Royal."

This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to re-
peat it
When his neighbors complained that any injustice was
done them.

"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remem-
ber,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left
hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice pre-
sided
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the
people.
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the
balance,
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine
above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the land were cor-
rupted;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed,
and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's
palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a sus-
picion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the
thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its
left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the
balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was in-
woven."

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the
 blacksmith
 Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no
 language;
 All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as
 the vapors
 Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the
 winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,
 Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-
 brewed



"In friendly contention the old men
 Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manoeuvre."

Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the vil-
 lage of Grand-Pré;
 While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and ink-
 horn,
 Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the
 parties,
 Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in
 cattle.
 Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were com-
 pleted,

And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.

Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table

Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bride-groom,

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,

While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.

Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus passed the evening away. Anon the bell from the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straight-way

Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the heath-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.

Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,

Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.

Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of
her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and
its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully
folded
Linen and woolen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven



"Many a farewell word and sweet good night on the door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness."

This was the precious dower she would bring to her hus-
band in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a
housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant
moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till
the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of
the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood
with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the
orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp
and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of
sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the
moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a
moment.
And as she gazed from the window she saw serenely the
moon pass,
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her
footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with
Hagar!



"For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it."

IV.

PLEASANTLY rose next morn the sun on the village of
Grand-Pré.

Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.

Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the
morning.

Now from the country around, from the farms and the
neighboring hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young
folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous
meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in
the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the
highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were
silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups
at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossipped to-
gether,



"Now from the country around, from the farms and the neighboring
hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants."

Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and
feasted;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers to-
gether,
All things were held in common, and what one had was
another's.
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abun-
dant:
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome
and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she
gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Bending with golden fruit, was spread the feast of be
trothal.

There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the
notary seated;

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the
beehives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts
and of waistcoats.



"Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows."

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his
snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the
fiddler

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from
the embers.

Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*,

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;

Olk folk and young together, and children mingled among them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous

Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,



"Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the
head-stones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest."

Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the head-stones

Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly among them

Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal,

Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the
soldiers.

Then arose their commander, and spake from the steps of
the altar,

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal com-
mission.

" You are convened this day," he said, " by his Majesty's
orders.

Clement and kind has he been; but how you have an-
swered his kindness,

Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my
temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be
grievous.

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our
monarch;

Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of
all kinds

Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from
this province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell
there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!

Prisoners now I declare you; for such is his Majesty's
pleasure!"

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the
hailstones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters his
windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from
the house-roofs,

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their in-
closures;

So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the
speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then
rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the
doorway.

Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce impre-
cations

Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads
of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the black-
smith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and
wildly he shouted—
“ Down with the tyrants of England! we never have
sworn them allegiance!
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes
and our harvests!”
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of
a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the
pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the
altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into
silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his
people;
Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and
mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock
strikes.
“ What is this that ye do, my children? what madness
has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and
taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and
privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and for-
giveness?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you
profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with
hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing
upon you!

See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion !

Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer, ‘O Father, forgive them !’

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,

Let us repeat it now, and say, ‘O Father, forgive them !’
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that passionate outbreak ;

And they repeated his prayer, and said, “O Father, forgive them !”

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar.

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people *** responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts ; and the Ave Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devotion translated,

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.

Long at her father’s door Evangeline stood, with her right hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor, and roofed each

Peasant’s cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table ;

There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild flowers ;

There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy ;

And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset

Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.

Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,



"Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate hearts of the women."

And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended—

Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience !

Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate hearts of
the women,

As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapors
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.
Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,
“Gabriel!” cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board stood the supper untasted,
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the whispering rain fall Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created!
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.



"Marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers."

V.

FOUR times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,

Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.

Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,

While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ; and there on the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants. All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;

All day long the wains came laboring down from the village. Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting, Echoing far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the church-yard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and way-worn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.

Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,

Sang they with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions—

“ Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible fountain ! Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience ! ”

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the way-side

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,

Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction—

Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession approached her,

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.

Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder and whispered—

“Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another, Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!”

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the weary heart in his bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried, While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight

Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving

Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.



"Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farmyard—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid."

Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard—

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,
 Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.
 Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
 Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.
 Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,
 Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,



"Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and meadow."

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore. Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father, And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man, Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion, E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken. Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food ; yet he moved not, he looked not,
he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.
“*Benedicite !*” murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and
his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a
threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of
sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the
maiden,
Raising his eyes, full of tears, to the silent stars that above
them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sor-
rows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in
silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the
blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the
horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and
meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows
together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the
village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in
the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quiver-
ing hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch,
and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred
house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame inter-
mingled.
These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and
on shipboard.

Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
“ We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré !”
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned ; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.
Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them ;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,
Lo ! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the sea-shore
Motionless lay his form from which the soul had departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illuminated the landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,

And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering
senses,

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people—
“ Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of
our exile,

Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the church-
yard.”

Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by
the sea-side,

Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-
Pré.

And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast con-
gregation,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the
dirges.

’T was the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the
ocean,

With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying
landward.

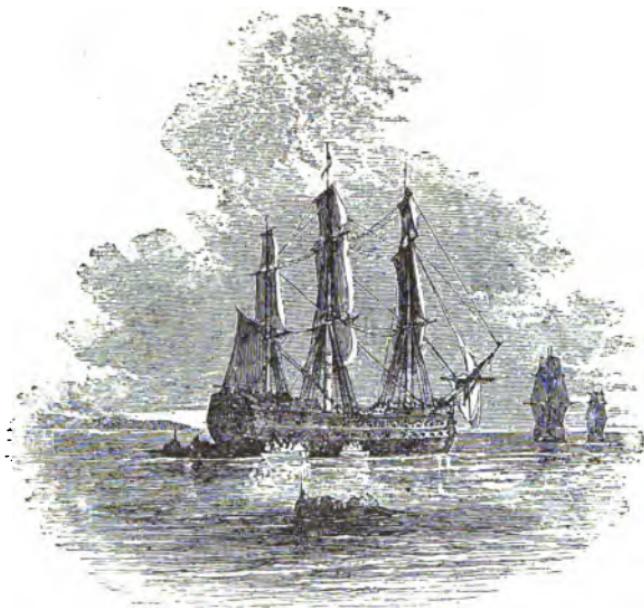
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of em-
barking ;

And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the
harbor,

Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village
in ruins.



“ Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.”



"Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;
And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the harbor."



"Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things."

PART THE SECOND.

I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-
Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind
from the northeast
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of
Newfoundland.

Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the church-yards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended, Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished;
As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine, Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and endeavor;
Sometimes in church-yards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in
in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside
him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.
Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved
and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said they; “O, yes! we have seen
him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to
the prairies;

Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters and
trappers,”

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said others; “O, yes! we have
seen him.

He is a *Voyageur* in the lowlands of Louisiana.”

Then would they say: “Dear child! why dream and wait
for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?
Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary’s son, who has loved
thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be
happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine’s tresses.”
Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly—“I
cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and
not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illuminates
the pathway,

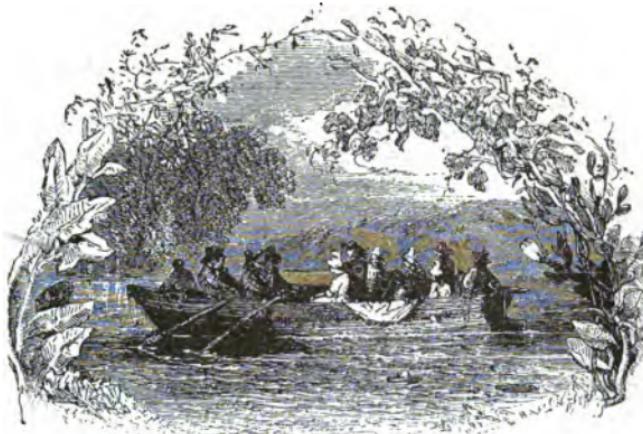
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in dark-
ness.”

And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,
Said, with a smile—“O daughter! thy God thus speaketh
within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of
refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the
fountain.

Patience; accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work of affection !
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.
Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven !”
Cheered by the good man’s words, Evangeline labored and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean, But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered, “Despair not !”
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer’s footsteps ; Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence ;
But as a traveler follows a streamlet’s course through the valley ;
Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only : Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur ;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet.



"Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen."

II.

IT WAS the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.

It was a band of exiles; a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked

Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common
misfortune;

Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by
hearsay,

Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred
farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father
Felician.

Onward, o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness somber
with forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its
borders,

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where
plumelike



"Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plume-like
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current."

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with
the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their
margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans
waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the
river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-
cots.
They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual
summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange
and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the east-
ward.
They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering the
Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direc-
tion.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the
cypress
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient
cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the
herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac
laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on
the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining
the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through
chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things
around them;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and
sadness—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be com-
passed.



'Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water.'

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that faintly floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.
Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.
Then Evangeline slept: but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,
And through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
Far off, indistinct, as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from those shades ;
 and before them
 Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
 Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
 Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the
 lotus
 Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
 Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia
 blossoms,



" Resplendent in beauty, the lotus,
 Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen."

And with the heat of noon ; and numberless sylvan
 islands,
 Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges
 of roses,
 Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
 Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were sus-
 pended.
 Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the
 margin,

Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about on the greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travelers slumbered.

Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.

Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grape-vine

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,

Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.

Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.

Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven.

Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.

Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,

Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.

Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows,

And undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen,
were the sleepers ;

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,



Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travelers slumbered."

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden

Said with a sigh to the friendly priest—"O Father Felician !

Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition ?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit ?"

Then, with a blush, she added—"Alas for my credulous fancy !

Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning." But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered—

"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,

On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheep-fold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-trees ;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens

Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.

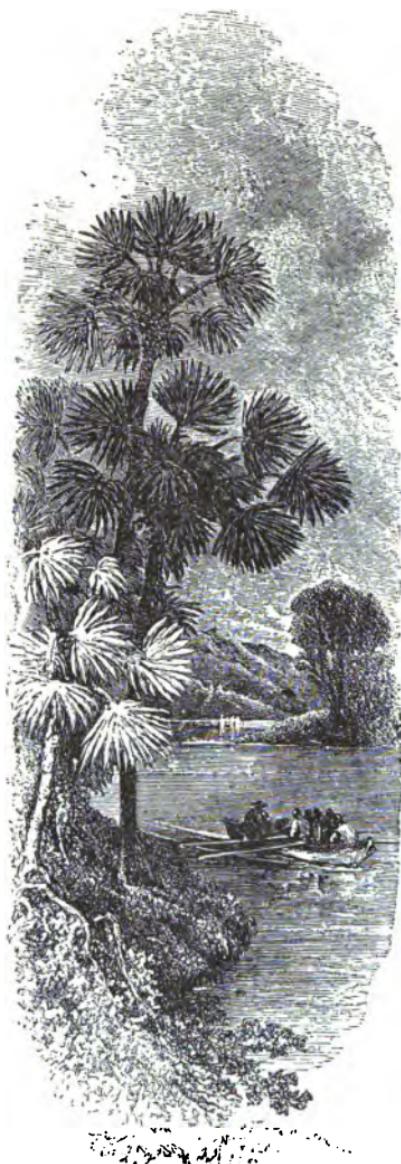
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

And with these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon

Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape ;

Twinkling vapors arose ; and sky and water and forest



“ Nearer, and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o’er the water.”

Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver, Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweet-
ness.

Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water, Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music, That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad ; then soaring to madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bac-chantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation ;

Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops

Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,

Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,

And through the amber air, above the crest of the wood-land,

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring dwelling;

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.



"The house itself was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together."

III.

NEAR to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks, from
whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-
tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A
garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of
timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.
Large and low was the roof ; and on slender columns sup-
ported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of
rivals,

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and
sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in
shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a path-
way
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limit-
less prairie,
Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the
tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grape-
vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the
prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish
sombbrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its
master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine, that were
grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the land
scape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and ex-
panding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the
evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the
prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the
gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing
to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement,
and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the Black
smith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and
answer



"Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean."

Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly
embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and
thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts
and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embar-
rassed,

Broke the silence and said—"If you come by the Atchafalaya,

How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed. Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent—

"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.

Then the good Basil said—and his voice grew blithe as he said it—

"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed. Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit

Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.

Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,

Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,

He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens, Tedium even to me, that at length I bethought me and sent him,

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;

He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.

Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,

Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals,
 Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
 "Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian
 minstrel!"
 As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and
 straightway
 Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the
 old man



"'Long live Michael,' they cried, 'our brave Acadian minstrel!'
 As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession."

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,
 Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,
 Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and
 daughters.
 Much they marveled to see the wealth of the ci-devant
 blacksmith,
 All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchial de-
 meanor;

Much they marveled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them;
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the airy veranda,
Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil
Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and illumining the landscape with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened:
“ Welcome once more, my friends, who so long have been friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.
Smoothly the plowshare runs through the soil as a keel through the water.
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber
With a few blows of the ax are hewn and framed into houses.

After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms and your cattle."

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils,
And his huge, brawny hand came thundering down on the table,
So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer—
"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"

Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.
It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herdsman.

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors;
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as strangers,
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle, Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted, All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the maddening Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.
Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman

Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the
garden.

Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the
forest,

Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the
river

Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous
gleam of the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious
spirit.

Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the
garden

Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and
confessions

Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows
and night-dews,

Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical
moonlight

Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,
As, through the garden gate, beneath the brown shade of
the oak-trees,

Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless
prairie.

Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and the fire-flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite
numbers.

Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the
heavens,

Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and
worship,

Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that
temple,

As if a hand had appeared and written upon them,
“Upharsin.”

And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-
flies,

Wandered alone, and she cried—“O Gabriel! O my be-
loved!

Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?

Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not
reach me?

Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands
around me!

Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy
slumbers.

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about
thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoorwill
sounded

Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighbor-
ing thickets,

Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into
silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of
darkness;

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-
morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the
garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his
tresses

With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of
crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy
threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting
and famine,

And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bride-
groom was coming."

"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil
descended

Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were
waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine
and gladness,

Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding
before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,

Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and uncertain

Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country,

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord,

That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,

Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.



"With horses, and guides, and companions,
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies."



"Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him."

IV.

FAR in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous
summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge,
like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's
wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and
Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river
Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the
Nebraska;

And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wander the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wander the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage marauders;
Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.

Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of
his camp-fire

Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at
nightfall,

When they had reached the place, they found only embers
and ashes.

And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies
were weary,

Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished
before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently
entered

Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her
sorrow.

She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches,
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois, had
been murdered.

Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and
friendliest welcome

Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted
among them

On the buffalo meat and the venison cooked on the embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his com-
panions,

Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer
and the bison,

Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the
quivering fire-light

Flushed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped
up in their blankets,

Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian
accent,

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and
reverses.

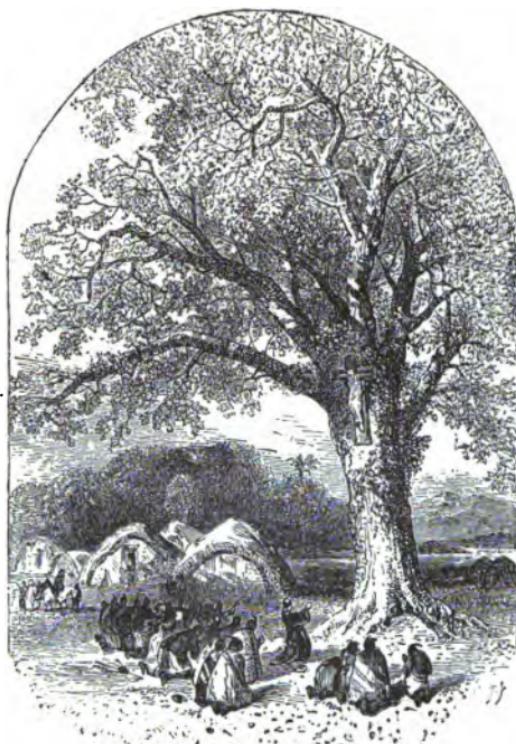
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that
another

Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disap-
pointed.

Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's com-
passion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was
near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had
ended
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale
of the Mowis;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a
maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the
wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into
the forest,
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seem like a weird
incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of
spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a
moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a
phantom.
And with this thought she slept, and the fear and the
phantom had vanished.



"Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children."

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed; and the
Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along—"On the western slope of
these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mis-
sion.

Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they hear him."

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered—
"Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!"

Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grape-vines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travelers, nearer approaching.
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade them
Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother tongue in the forest,
And with words of kindness conducted them into his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of
the maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of
the teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity
answered:

"Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his
journey!"

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an ac-
cent of kindness;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the
snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have de-
parted.

"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but
in autumn

When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and sub-
missive—

"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and
afflicted."

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the
morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and
companions,

Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the
Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other—
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that
were springing

Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now
waving above her,

Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and
forming

Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by
squirrels.

Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the
maidens

Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the
corn-field.

Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.
"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy
prayer will be answered!
Look at this delicate plant that lifts its head from the
meadow,
See how its leaves all point to the north, as true as the
magnet;
It is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has sus-
pended
Here on its fragile stock, to direct the traveler's journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of pas-
sion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of
fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is
deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the
dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter—yet Ga-
briel came not;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin
and blue-bird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came
not.
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was
wafted
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests.
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw river.
And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St.
Lawrence,
Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan
forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and
places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden;
Now in the tents of grace of the meek Moravian Missions,

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities,
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.

Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long
journey;

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from her
beauty.

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the
shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er
her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.



"In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded."

V.

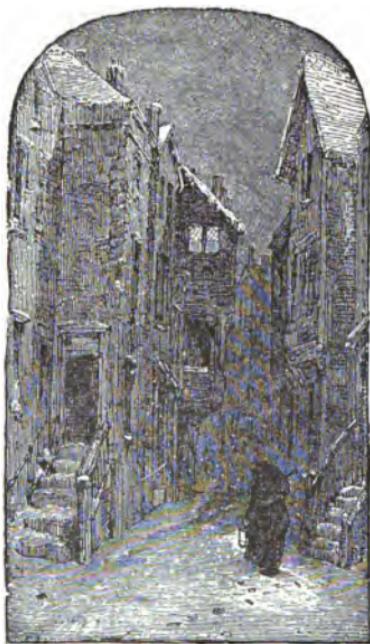
In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's
waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he
founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of
beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the
forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts
they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an
exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the
city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer
a stranger:

And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the
Quakers,

For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and
sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts
and her footsteps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning



"Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated,
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper."

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world
far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illuminated with love; and the
pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in
the distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not. Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not absent;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others, This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices, Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour. Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city, Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected. Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper. Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city, Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons.
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their caws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September, Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in a meadow,

So death flooded life, and o'erflowing its natural margin,
 Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of existence.
 Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the
 oppressor;
 But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger—
 Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants.



"Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs
 Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruit for the market,
 Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings."

Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless
 Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and
 woodlands—
 Now the city surrounds it; but still with its gateway and
 wicket

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo

Softly the words of the Lord—"The poor ye always have with you."

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy.
The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there

Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,

Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,

Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden;

And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,

That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east wind,

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,

While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;

Something within her said—"At length thy trials are ended;"

And, with a light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants, moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it for ever
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-time;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.



"Through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
'Gabriel! O my beloved!' and died away into silence."

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder

Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,

That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever, As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over, Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down to infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, for ever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like, "Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them, Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision. Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank thee!"



"Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping,
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city."

STILL stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,

Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.

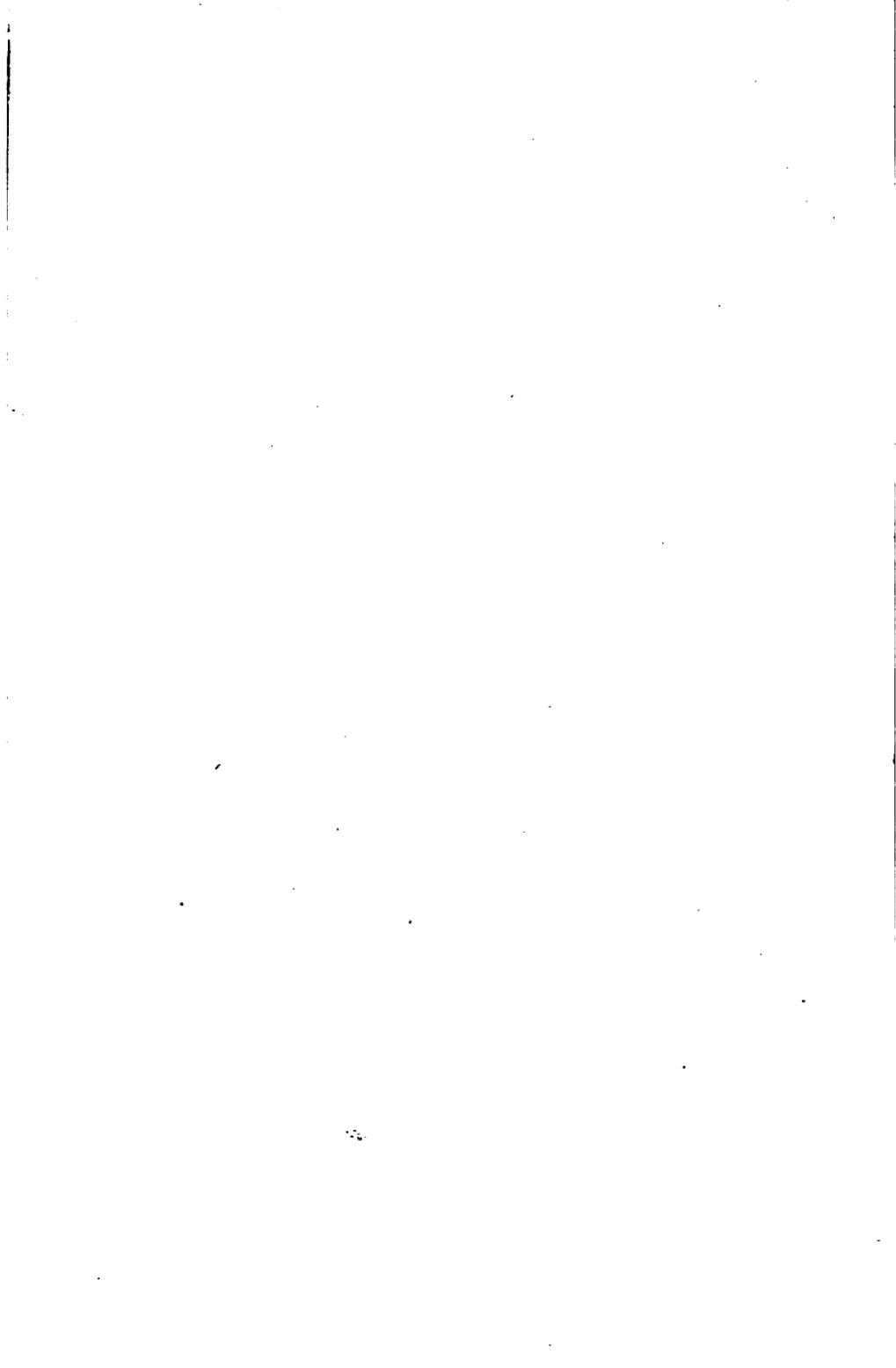
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,

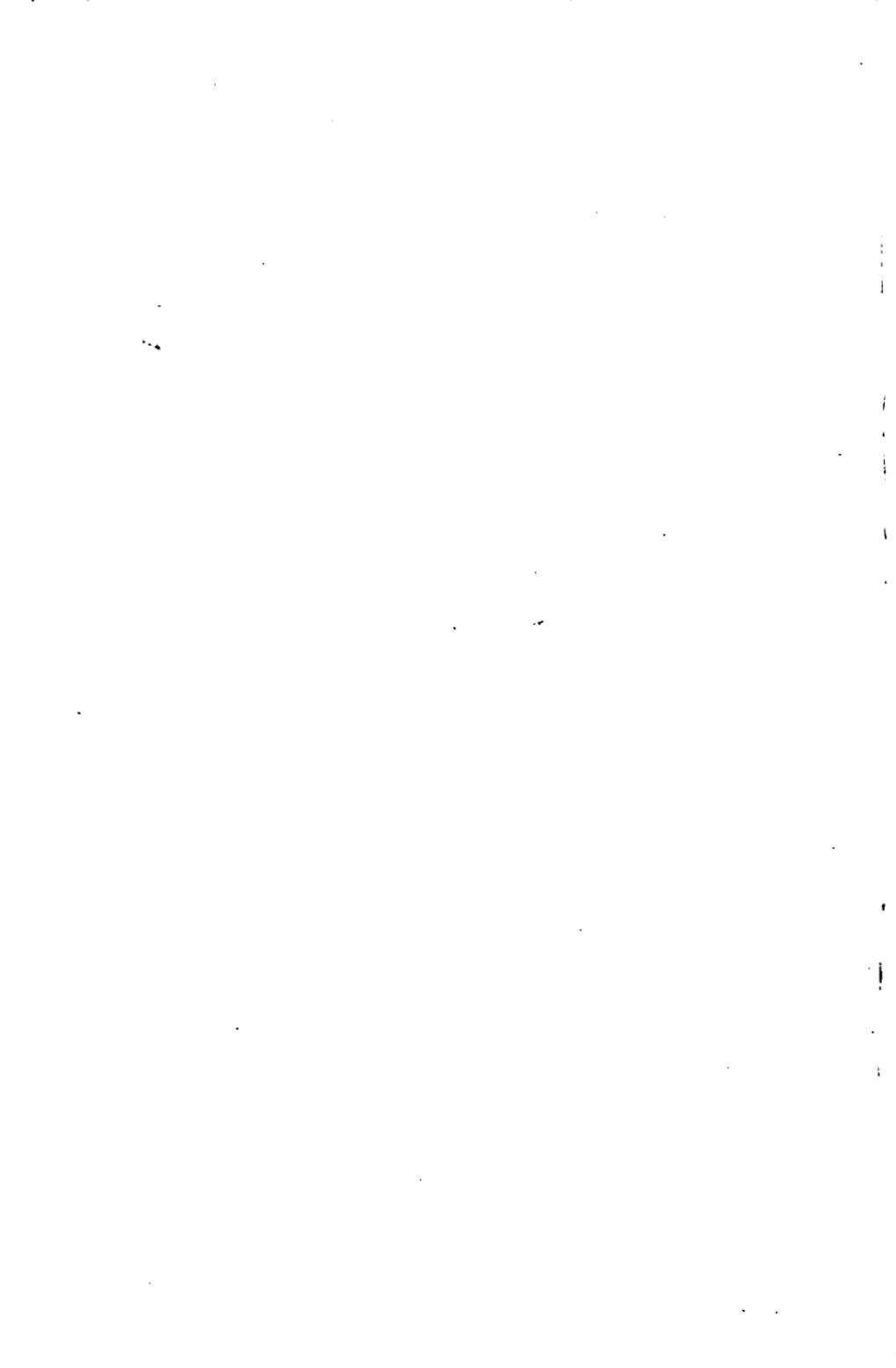
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed,
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest
and for ever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are
busy.
 Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from
their labors,
 Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed
their journey!
 Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its
branches
 Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
 Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
 Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
 Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom,
 In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy;
 Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of
homespun,
 And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
 While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring
ocean
 Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the
forest.



*Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun.
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story."*





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